

Sei Whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*)



Sei (pronounced "say") whales can be confused with fin and Bryde's whales, all of which have prominent, curved dorsal fins. This species has only a single prominent ridge on the moderately V-shaped head, which has a slightly downturned tip. Sei whales can reach 59 feet (18 meters) in length.

Sei whales are considered rare in California waters and do not appear to be associated with coastal features as they are an open ocean, temperate water species (Forney et al. 2000). There was one confirmed sighting of a sei whale in California waters during NMFS surveys in 1991 to 1993 and 1996, but there are no abundance estimates of sei whales along the west coast. Sei whales feed on copepods, euphausiids, small fish and squid (Wynne and Folken 1992).

(source: MMS Dept of Interior website & CDFG website)

Cuvier's Beaked Whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*)



Cuvier's beaked whale measures about 23 feet (7 m), weighs 2 – 3 tons and is colored in a range of browns/grays with white marks. They have long, circular scars and usually have a pale head. The mouthline is short and upturned, and the head is the shape of a goose beak. This species has a single pair of teeth (found in the tip of the lower jaw), which point forward. Like all beaked whales, this is a deepwater species that feeds mostly on squid, but also will take fish. Dives of up to 40 minutes have been recorded.

(source MMS Dept of Interior website)

Risso's Dolphin (*Grampus griseus*)



Risso's dolphins are robust dolphins with a blunt head; tall, curved dorsal fin; and a dark gray to white body that as an adult, is covered with white scratches and blotches. The scratches are thought to be in part due to the sharp beaks of the squids upon which they feed. This species has recorded lengths of up to 12.5 feet (3.8 meters). They have a very tall dorsal fin that can be up to 20 inches (50 cm) high.

Risso's dolphins are distributed world-wide in tropical and warm-temperate waters. Off the U.S. West coast, Risso's dolphins are commonly seen on the shelf in the Southern California Bight and in slope and offshore waters of California, Oregon and Washington. Based on sighting patterns from recent aerial and shipboard surveys conducted in these three states during different seasons, animals found off California during the colder water months are thought to shift northward into Oregon and Washington as water temperatures increase in late spring and summer (Green et al. 1992). The southern end of this population's range is not well-documented, but on a recent joint U.S./Mexican ship survey, Risso's dolphins were sighted off northern Baja California.

In the Santa Barbara Channel, they are found year round.

(sources NMFS NOAA website & MMS Dept of Interior website & CDFG)

Pacific White-Sided Dolphin **(*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*)**

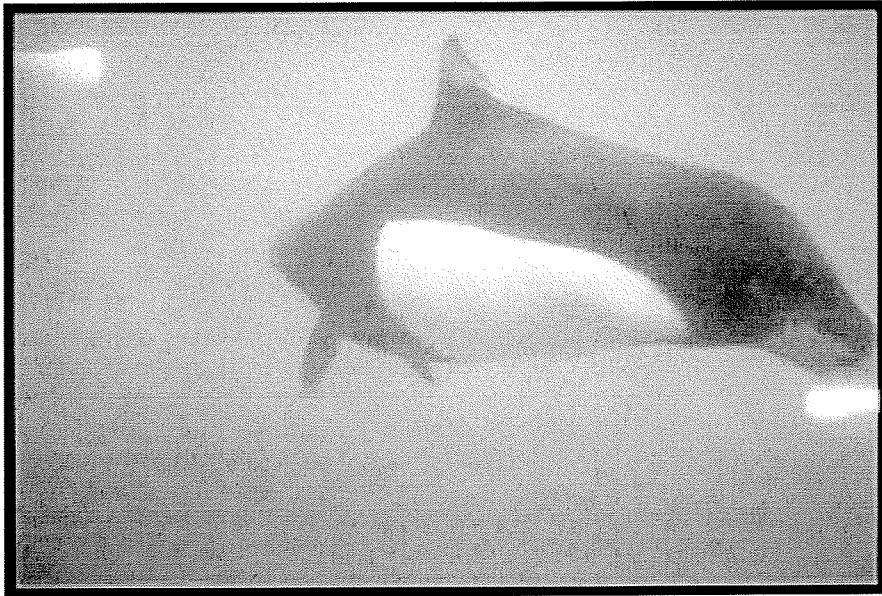


The Pacific white-sided dolphin is found throughout the temperate North Pacific Ocean, north of the coasts of Japan and Baja California, Mexico. In the eastern North Pacific the species occurs from the southern Gulf of California, north to the Gulf of Alaska, west to Amchitka in the Aleutian Islands, and is rarely encountered in the southern Bering Sea. The species is common both on the high seas and along the continental margins, and animals are known to enter the inshore passes of Alaska, British Columbia, and Washington (RIWC 1997).

They grow to 7.5 feet (2.3 meters) in length and weigh up to 330 lbs (150 kg). Pacific white-sided dolphins primarily feed on fish.

(sources: NMFS NOAA website & Monterey Bay Aquarium website)

Dall's Porpoise (*Phocoenoides dalli*)



Dall's porpoises are black with a striking white patch on the belly and flank. They have a small triangular dorsal fin and the posterior margin of the tail flukes are fringed with a grayish-white band.

Though individual animal coloring varies slightly, Dall's porpoises are easy to identify as they are mostly black with white along their sides, on the top half of their dorsal fins and on the trailing edge of their flukes. Dall's porpoises mature to around 7 feet (2.1 meters) long and have 19 - 23 spade-shaped teeth. When swimming, Dall's porpoises leave a characteristic splash called a "rooster tail."

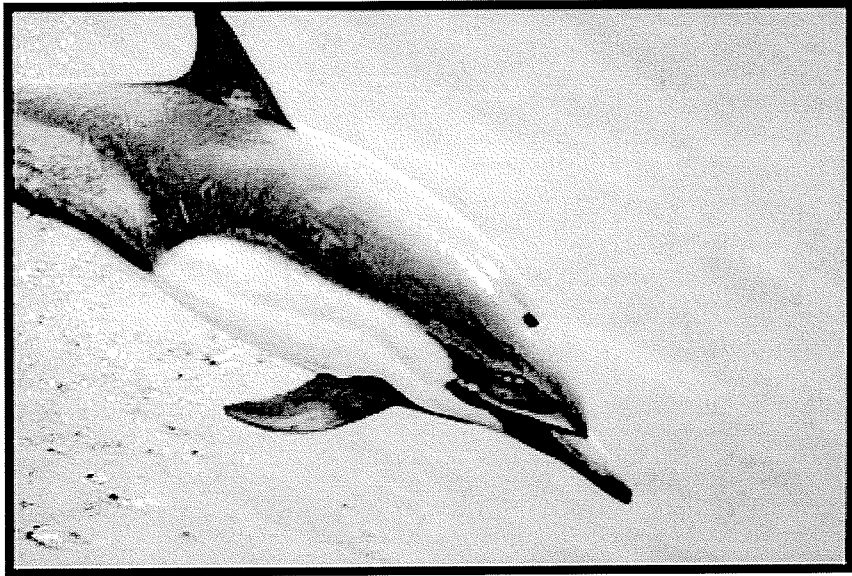
The Dall's porpoise are found in temperate waters of the Northern Pacific. Dall's porpoise are commonly found in shelf, slope and offshore waters of the U.S. West Coast. They are usually found in small groups of a dozen or so individuals. In Monterey Bay, group size was on average 5.7 animals with a maximum of 20 per group. In this area, mostly subadults were seen. They had a preference for the deeper water near the Monterey Submarine Canyon (Jefferson, 1991). In the Southern California Bight, they are most often seen when waters are the coldest (winter and spring). During the cold La Nina years they may travel as far south as northern Baja California.

(source: NOAA NMFS & NMML websites, CDFG website and OurWorld.CompuServe website)

Common Dolphins

Short-Beaked (*Delphinus delphis*)

Long-Beaked (*Delphinus capensis*)



There are two species common dolphins - the long-beaked common dolphin and the short-beaked common dolphin. The two differ in the length of their beaks or noses. The color patterns on a common dolphin are the most complex of any cetacean. They have 40 - 55 pairs of small pointed teeth on each side of their mouths. Their back is dark gray to dark black starting from the top of the head continuing down to the tail region. This color pattern dips into a V on the dolphin's sides below the dorsal fin, a distinguishing characteristic of the common dolphin. A tan or yellowish patch is found on both sides of the head along with large dark circles around the eyes. The dolphin's belly is white to creamy-white with a gray colored tail. The common dolphin can reach lengths of 7.5 to 8.5 feet (2.3 to 2.6 meters) and weigh up to 297 lbs (135 kg). On average the common dolphin is 5.8 to 8 feet (1.7 - 2.4 meters) and weighs 155 - 245 lbs (70 - 111 kg). Males are slightly larger than females. The dorsal fin is located near the middle of the back and is triangle-shaped, or falcate (pointed and curved) and is black to light gray in color with a black border. The dolphin's flippers are long and thin and generally dark in color.

Short-beaked common dolphins are the most abundant cetacean off California.

(sources: NCEAS at UCSB website & NOAA NMML website)